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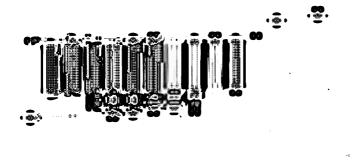
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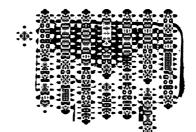




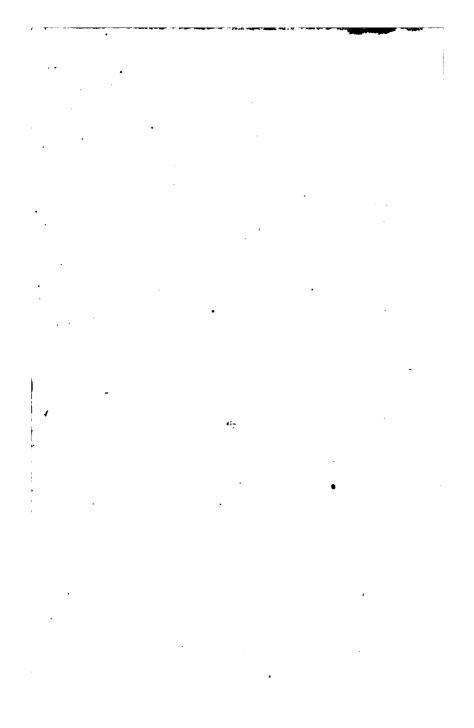








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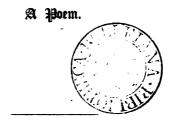
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THE

GLASS-BERG



LONDON
SAUNDERS AND OTLEY, CONDUIT STREET.
1851.

280. 1. 3.

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THE

GLASS-BERG.

A wish was in the mighty Sovereign's heart,

The teeming brains of men that wish obey'd;

The human will was roused to do its part,

And all its treasure-house of thought survey'd

The wish, the brain, the will, together wrought,

And pow'r performed what teeming Genius thought.

A wonder was conceived,—a wonder grew,

And, lo! the Glass-berg rises on our view.

Mountains of Glass—Glass glittering high and far,
Reflecting sunlight from its miles of mirror,
Standing transparent in the cool, grey air,
Slender, yet firm, like things which last for ever—
Far, far it stretches, fairy-like, yet proud.

It seems like sunlight in the evining cloud;

It goes beyond your thought,—'tis so ideal,
You must look twice before you think 'tis real.
And there it grew, through good and ill record;
And London friends to country cousins wrote
How from the first hand they could send them word
'Twould fall and crush the Queen, the Lords, the
Court;

How shook the galleries when two flies, or more,
Walked quickly through them; how the sappy floor
Sank in the mud; how human perspiration
Would fall in showers upon the gathered nation;
How sparrows, ladybirds, and beasts unclean
Spoil'd every single thing, which was not right;
How all this evil, some friend's friend had seen
How bearded foreigners came, pretending merely
To show things cheap, and then to sell them dearly;
And Colonel Reid's onen Man had told the writEr, they would burn down London in one night.
Yet there the Glass-berg rises, gaily great;

I see it from my window when the day

Shines fogless out upon its princely state,

And the straight Serpentine reflects the ray.

I see it when down Rotten-row we ride,
Old England's centaur-offspring, side by side,
And all address themselves to mark how well
The tender colours of the Glass-berg tell
Upon the English colouring of the sky;
Harmonious, gay, and bright,—not too bright for
the eye.

I think Man's sinews are almost sublime,
When a great work so quickly they fulfil;
There, in the vasty halls, we see how Time
Has been brought under to the English will.
Six months ago there was the Autumn grass,
Yet May's first day completes the hill of Glass.
And through their toil the soul-like men of clay
Have reverenc'd Sabbath rest; and when the day
Came round that saw the God of this great earth
Die for the race to which His will gave birth,
Then, too, they paused, (although the goal in sight
Was like a half-gained prize, uncertain quite,)
And with due awe abstained from temp'ral things,
For Him who makes and rules worlds, times and kings.

I to the GLASS-BERG drink a health,

And one to those who've paid;

The Queen! and all whose wit and wealth

Are in the Berg displayed.

I drink the Prince and all his race—
No health would I drink rather;
And Mr. Paxton, whom the place
Must bow to, as its father.

And Mr. Chance, the clever one,
Who builds sams wood and stones;
And Messieurs Fox and Henderson;
And Mr. Owen Jones.

I drink the Cousins who have comeFrom China and Tahiti,From Panama, and Indian homes,To bring us something pretty.

And to the brothers who traverse
Old Europe's beaten way,
I waft a health in wine and verse,
And this I frankly say,—

I've join'd my welcome to the rest,
To meet them from their homes,
And offer'd all things I possess'd,
Except my furnish'd rooms.

My Lady N—b— had the worse!

The money made her wonder;

The fellow straight pull'd out his purse

And offer'd "feeftin hunder."

He must, indeed, have been the devil,
And this his actions tell:

No sooner was the house his own
Than it became a hell.

That's worse than forty German men
All in the drawing-room smoking;
Or Grosvenor-street, where five times ten
Did things still more provoking.

So some for money's sake are fled,
And let their stories all;
And some, with tumults in their head,
Stand with their house or fall.

Some fear the pards will dance too fierce,
And fly the coming season;
And some from country corners haste,
Just for that very reason.

But fly or fear, or haste or run,

It matters not a pin,

For great and grand will be our fun

If we can but get in.

1st May .--

The wave-like multitude itself has roll'd

Within the Glass-berg's precincts, which enfold

Their entering groups as though its magic floor,

Absorbing all that came, had ever room for more.

So far, so very far, the scenes extend

Men seem a huddled mass about the end;

Then grow they into shapes, and, last of all,

The single figures stand detach'd and tall.

Along the mass two rows of red are seen,

Ribbons of red, extending into men,

Soldiers that guard the Sovereign's highway,

And with their brightness grace the festive day.

Mix'd with Art's marvels stand the old elm trees,

Shut with their green leaves from the outer breeze;

The growing crystal gradually enthrall'd them; "Imprison'd Giants" Lady Ea—ke call'd them.

Near them the Fountain, where I long'd to quaff; And near again, the Love-and-Venus group; But what 'mid all these beauties made me laugh Was Washington; his bust was done in SOAP. Amid these curious, bright, enchanting things We for a brief while have our wanderings, And all ourself is for a time forgot In gazing on the magic of the spot; Long vistas, free to day, which showers bright On strange seducing shapes a flood of light; The flash of jewels, and the marble wrought To human form, and noble human thought In tangible shapes, that make the bosom spring That brother-men can do so great a thing. Unending wealth, unending talent rise, Wherever wander the bewilder'd eyes; And much the impatient spirit does aspire To go where'er its wandering glance has gone; But blue policemen, senseless to its fire, Say "Keep your places," in most mortal tone.

So, as the Glass-berg's wonders yet must be
A distant perspective to you and me.

Let's look around on all these seated ones,

These gracious dames on their five thousand thrones.

Thrones? yes, for man stands by you, as is fit—His duty keeps him standing while you sit.

I see five thousand; how am I to choose

A few, to make them subjects for my Muse?

Ah! doubtless in my heart there moves a string

Which tells among five thousand whom to sing—

Thou whom I watch'd for while all enter'd in;

Thou being enter'd, then I ceas'd to watch,

Whose garment as it pass'd I sought to touch,

Whose glance I shudder'd at, when I did win,—

Thou whom I would not name, yet would hear nam'd,

Yet not too often, not by over many,

Thou beauty of my soul, who, scarce I know

If thou art priz'd or prais'd by others any—

Yes, thee I sing, and when the page shall meet
Thy truthful eye, oh, Heav'n, it will be sweet
To see it rise, wherever we may be,
And say in one brief glance, "Thou meanest me."

Not far from thee, I see the titled Dame, On whose white breast resplendent diamonds flame; Unlike the herd, who blaze not till the night, Her gems against the sun their radiance spend: And sometimes, dazzled by their splendid light, She overlooks the most familiar friend. Mother she is of Beauties—one fair face Still shows us at her side each well-taught grace; Bless'd be her lot, like those already gone, Whether she chuse the Barrack or the Throne. Chance has set near her one, with face as fair, Smiling beneath her braids of raven hair; With long pink things, (their name I cannot tell)— Which, hanging round that face, become it well. But all within, how sad the prospect lies, Present and future dark before her eyes!

From out a set of pretty girls she's come,
Who once like her stepp'd welcome from their home;
But who are clouded, the far north within,
By ev'ry sorrow saving that of sin.
And she, the pretty stranger, what shall she
Next year, or next, what shall the — — be?
Would that a heart would open wide its space,
And lure thee to that household resting-place;
Would that a hand which thou couldst love to take
Would clasp thee for thy gentle beauty's sake,
Guard thee along life's difficult highway,
And make that morning smile a bright noon-day.

Near by I see a Lady whom I love;
I love her gracious welcome, and her way
Of seeming to love others; (I approve
That wholesome flatt'ry, genial as the May),
I love her well-fill'd house each Tuesday night,
Ere Easter comes with its redoubled light;
And more, the simple feast which once I shar'd,
Well pleas'd to sit at the domestic board.

Wisdom was there, and lore, which treated kings Of buried Egypt like familiar things; Music, who did from her high stool descend, And sate in easy chairs, a social friend; And lib'ral Conscience, fit to judge and praise, And kindly feeling, and the simple ways Of a large family-all loving all-Thee, elder daughter! humbly I recal In 'broidered jacket, fitting close thy waist, And hanging sleeves which well thy white arms grac'd, And net that held thy hair about thy head, And bird that to thy finger gladly fled,— And younger sister thou !-not seen to-day! O'er whom full oft my wistful thoughts will stray, With innocent face, and form that seems design'd To wander through the forest free as wind, And let thy fair locks float upon the breeze, While devious flittest thou among the trees. And yet, alas! a spell is o'er thee thrown, That like a fairy princess binds thee down,

Captive to some unkind, malicious elf,
And thy free will moves all except thyself.
Ah, God! among thy hours, let that hour be,
Which bids the patient, pretty girl be free.

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Next, glancing round, my eyes behold a shape,
From which no beauty-loving eyes escape.
Göthe has said, "the finest talents lay
Lodg'd fitly in the finest-moulded clay;"
And, had he sought examples, would have said,—
"Hear, read that woman—see her form, her head."

Nature is near her still, to recommend;
Her face inclines the world to be her friend,
Vigour and health her active steps approve,
It is a pleasure at her side to move;
Graciousness seems her ev'ry word to fit,
And with it rolls the bright brook of her wit.
Her voice has music at its sweet command,
The pen is like a sceptre in her hand.

Too many talents! Gifts too freely pour'd;
Like those by heroines in a book possess'd;
Is there a something that must be endur'd
Even by her, to make her like the rest?

I catch at times a view of rougher forms
Behind each Beauty, who my fancy warms.
I see the Nun-preserver; at his side
The Man with a gilt carriage and fair Bride;
I see the grizzled head, o'er others tall,
The eye that sees the evil of it all—
The keen-edg'd wit that takes the gilding off,
And puts down vanity with pungent scoff,
Unveiling all the thoughts that lurk within,
While we in vain disown our folly, and our sin.

The doors are shut, and none has enter'd in—A long half-hour, while thus we wait within.

All that shall witness this day's sight are here,
And now, stand up! The sight itself is near.

Behold, the doors fly open, and the roar

Of shouts increasing from without rush in, While in the Glass-berg twenty thousand more

Add voices to the cheers that greet the Queen.

I think one must be born a Queen to bear
That glorious thrill of voices in the air;
That human thunder, rolling round the scene,
To greet oneself—to shout The Queen! the Queen!
Great tears come gathering in my foolish eye
Merely to hear the wild, the mingled cry.
Tis not for love, or pride, that one rejoices,
But for the deep emotion of the voices.
But she is calm, is graceful, and by heart,
Queenly and womanly, she knows her part—
To every side she bends, none passes she,
Pleas'd with us all, each in our due degree.

And when the anthem peals, the prayer ascends, The Queen, no longer Queen, devoutly bends; Shows not, nor hides the worship in her eye, And feels the full sublime of Heaven's Majesty. When that is o'er, she leaves her place to pass O'er all the highways of the hill of Glass, And England's pomp is gather'd in her suite, A nation's splendour spreads around her feet: Those gifts are Fortune's; but this hour to see Nature's great presents to her, touches me. See what she is, besides the glittering scene; Besides what makes her "Happy as a Queen-" A pretty woman, who could win a place In hearts, by showing that fair, rose-leaf face; And near her, are the darling shapes and frames-That call her by familiar household names, Mother and wife, and every pretty word That by a merely Queen are never heard. Each treasure ever given, each dear form, Is, with her, safe as yet from ev'ry storm;

And love that makes her people round her bend,
Bestows upon her, children, husband, friend.
I think of her as oft I have beheld
In plaided shawl, straw bonnet which expell'd
The Highland sun, with foot that tir'd never,
Climbing the hill, or wand'ring by the river;
Health in her frame, and laughter-moving word
Caught by the friend, by courtier all unheard,
And joy to feel her state-freed step so nerv'd,
Free to go anywhere, and unobserv'd.
Thoughts, too, has she to enjoy the well-tuned string,

An eye to love the Artist's pencilling.

And, as she moves, we see her mark how well

The quickly-gathered Glass-berg owns her spell.

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Two of this glorious pageant bear a part,
Which goes right home to ev'ry beating heart:
The One was maim'd, when, in the fight sublime,
The Other sav'd the world a second time—

He on the other leans, two old men now, But glorious beyond life and death I trow. Titles there are, high names beyond rebuke, But, 'mong them all, one only is the Duke: Beyond all titles, 'tis a name that cries— "Behold your hero, your great man, your wise' A name our children seek to realize, And press to see what form the great Duke bears: And if he smile on them, or touch their head, They lay the thought by for their future years, That they may say, "Here was his finger laid!" This day unconscious England saw him born;* Long be 't ere grateful England for him mourn. Pale is he but upright, his step is good; And when the drums roll'd till the building shook, I rais'd my voice up, and I shouted loud, As he pass'd closely by, "God bless the Duke."

Now, round the wondering halls the Queen has pass'd, She's walk'd her mile of triumph through at last;

^{* 1}st of May--the Duke's birth-day.

And when again her foot is to the north,
She with her noble company goes forth;
The barriers fall, the trumpets tell the crowd
That they are free to go where'er they please,
So let's obey the call they give so loud,
And see the Glass-berg's wonders at our ease.

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